



**150 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet IL 60432**

## **Media Release**

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### **City of Joliet Reminds Residents to Take Precautions to Reduce Mosquito Population Due To Growing West Nile Virus Concerns From The Will County Health Department**

The Will County Health Department has notified the City of Joliet of a positive test for West Nile Virus in mosquitos caught in the Joliet traps.

The City of Joliet reminds residents to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites and help reduce the number of potential mosquito breeding sites around their home. Residents are encouraged to remove areas of standing water from their property, as it can act as a breeding ground for this insect.

To help control the mosquito population and, most importantly the species responsible for carrying the West Nile Virus, the City has contracted with Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management. The habitat for the species of mosquito that carries the West Nile Virus is in manholes, catch basins, and inlets where standing water can be found. The City of Joliet Mosquito Abatement Program targets all the manholes, catch basins, and inlets to treat with an organic certified extended-release tablet to eradicate these mosquitos. This tablet is effective up to 180 days. The City of Joliet works in conjunction with the Will County Health Department to evaluate and determine when the West Nile Virus is present.

West Nile Virus is a mosquito-borne virus transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Most people who are infected with the West Nile Virus have no symptoms or experience very mild symptoms 3 to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. Mild symptoms include a fever, headache, and body aches, (occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body), and swollen lymph glands.

Less than 1 percent of infected people with West Nile Virus will develop severe symptoms. These symptoms include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis. Persons older than 50 years of age and immunocompromised persons (e.g. transplant patients) have the highest risk of severe disease.

The best way to prevent West Nile disease, or any other mosquito-borne illness, is to reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and to take personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites. Precautions include:

- Whenever outdoors between dusk and dawn, wear shoes and socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose fitting, light colored clothing is best. Consider staying indoors at dusk and dawn, which is peak mosquito biting time.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin when outdoors. The most effective repellents contain DEET. Use caution when applying repellent to children. Products containing 10 percent or less DEET are the most appropriate for children from 2 to 12 years of age. Use repellents as directed by the manufacturer.

- Install tight-fitting window and door screens. Check for, and repair, any tears in residential screens, including porches and patios. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night.
- Reduce or eliminate the amount of standing water around your home. Remove old tires, tin cans, flower pots and buckets, and change the water in birdbaths at least once a week. Any container holding water for more than four days can become a breeding ground for thousands of mosquitoes.
- Keep gutters clear of debris.
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well trimmed around your home.
- Eliminate yard ruts and puddles.
- Aerate ornamental ponds or stock with larvae eating fish.
- Use *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), available in hardware stores, in any standing water around your home.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas, and hot tubs regularly.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties. Check on the elderly regularly.

**Martin J. Shanahan, Jr.**  
**Interim City Manager**

The City of Joliet is the third largest city in the state of Illinois, located just 45 miles southwest of Chicago's Loop. Home to over 149,000 residents, in addition to thriving businesses and attractions, the City of Joliet is easily accessible by rail, auto and bus transit. A perfect place to live, work and play, Joliet is constantly striving to promote growth and diversity. For more information on Joliet visit [www.cityofjoliet.info](http://www.cityofjoliet.info) or call 815-724-4000. The City of Joliet's Media Releases are always available on our website.